Among his papers he left behind two related essays. The first, entitled "Our Medical Staff," describes some of the Asylum doctors, just before the outbreak of World War I. In Mr. Alger's depiction, they are rather remote individuals, too wrapped up in themselves to notice their idiosyncrasies (let alone Mr. Alger's). The opinions of the superintendent, at this time Dr. J.M. Forster, carry more weight in the Asylum world than Teddy Roosevelt's in the real one; but they are bromides about "fresh air" and "mental and physical hygiene," whose only effect is to make flies scarce and fresh air plentiful in his office. Dr. Clare, his assistant, is the "chief of works, chief lever-puller, and major-domo"; Mr. Alger remarks the "abysmal profundity of his lectures in psychiatry," but that most of the patients liked him -- a heavy man, fond of laughter, good-natured and boring. The first assistant physician, however, was a "great dispenser" of smiles, a lady's man with an annoying habit of looking at his bank book. The main thing he noticed about the pathologist were his "lovely teeth," which unfortunately went with "biting" remarks. He was unpopular with the stenographers, who found him "pedantic and dogmatic on occasions."

In the second piece, "The Personal Influence of the Physician in the Treatment of Mental Cases," Mr. Alger argues for a more "individual" approach -- which toward the end of Clarke's tenure at the Asylum, is still far from the reality. He urges physicians to tailor their authority according to kind of patient. "Semi-intelligent and poorly educated" patients only understand "brute force," so have to be dealt with by the attendants, though at the cost of any remaining self-respect. But "intelligent and educated" patients ought to be the responsibility of the superintendent and his assistants, since such patients are capable of recognizing and appreciating their authority. But this clearly a reciprocal relationship. Unless acutely ill, they will make their own "mental estimate" of the doctors. Many patients know that "they are not what they should be," so will submit to the doctor's authority, provided that he displays "character and intelligence." It is therefore in the doctors' interest to be courteous and considerate of these patients. The better the first impression, the greater the chance of a cure. Conversation, "views and timely observations," the very sort of things doctors have least time for, would do as much as "drugs, baths, etc."

Mr. Alger concludes that Doctors should be men of "striking personality," notable for "culture, delicacy and learning," not "despots, as has often been the case, in the past." Meanwhile many doctors continue to behave coarsely, or